

What is claimed is:

1. A system for associating a diagnostic code to a visit record of a patient visit, comprising:
 - an interface processor for receiving a visit record comprising a first diagnostic code derived by using a first assignment system;
 - a source of rules for processing said visit record to determine a second diagnostic code compatible with a second assignment system;
 - a data processor for processing said visit record and said first diagnostic code using said rules to provide said visit record including said second diagnostic code; and
 - an output processor for processing said visit record including said second diagnostic code compatible with said second assignment system to be suitable for output to a user.
2. A system according to claim 1, wherein said data processor processes said rules to determine said second diagnostic code compatible with said second assignment system using a plurality of information elements in said visit record including at least one of, (a) a primary diagnosis identifier, (b) a medical procedure identifier, (c) a patient age, (d) a patient gender, (e) a secondary diagnosis identifier, (f) a service identifier identifying a service performed for a patient, (g) a length of patient stay in a medical facility, (h) an admission date, (i) a visit end date, (j) a diagnosis date and (k) a procedure date.
3. A system according to claim 1, wherein said first diagnostic code equals said second diagnostic code.
4. A system according to claim 1, wherein said rules include sets of rules associated with particular time periods of validity for processing said visit record to determine said second diagnostic code compatible with said second assignment system valid during a particular time period, and an individual set of

rules has a time period of validity determined by a start date and an end date, and said data processor processes said visit record and said first diagnostic code using said rules to provide said visit record including said second diagnostic code valid for a particular time period encompassing a date of said visit.

5. A system according to claim 1, wherein said interface processor receives said visit record wherein said first diagnostic code is a null code, and said data processor processes said visit record, said rules to provide said visit record including said second diagnostic code.
6. A system according to claim 1, wherein said second assignment system comprises a predetermined system of rules for assigning said second diagnostic code to said visit record based on characteristics of said visit as determined from information contained in said visit record.
7. A system according to claim 6, wherein said second assignment system comprises at least one of, (a) a CMS Grouper, (b) a Champus Grouper, (c) an All-Patient DRG Grouper and (d) a United States state associated Grouper.
8. A system according to claim 1, wherein said second diagnostic code is derived from a code set including at least one of: (a) ICD-9-CM, (b) ICD-10, (c) HCPCS, (d) NDC, (e) CPT-4, (f) CDPN, (g) SNOMED-RT, (h) UMLS, (i) LOINC (j) "Read Codes", (k) DIN, (l) CDT, (m) NIC, and (n) DRGs Diagnosis Related Groups.
9. A system according to claim 1, wherein said data processor uses said rules, for, identifying whether said first diagnostic code is incompatible with said second assignment system and if said first diagnostic code is incompatible, assigning said second diagnostic code to be compatible with said second assignment system.

10. A system according to claim 1, wherein said data processor uses said rules for processing a plurality of visit records and corresponding associated first diagnostic codes using said rules to provide said plurality of visit records including second diagnostic codes compatible with said second assignment system by, identifying whether said first diagnostic codes are incompatible with said second assignment system and for visit records comprising incompatible codes, assigning second diagnostic codes to be compatible with said second assignment system and for visit records comprising compatible codes, using said first diagnostic codes as said second diagnostic codes.
11. A system for associating a diagnostic code to a record of a patient visit, comprising:
 - an interface processor for receiving a visit record comprising a first diagnostic code derived by using a first assignment system;
 - a source of sets of rules associated with particular time periods of validity, for processing said visit record to determine a second diagnostic code compatible with a second assignment system valid during a particular time period;
 - a data processor for processing said visit record and said first diagnostic code using said sets of rules to provide said visit record including said second diagnostic code, said second diagnostic code being valid for a particular time period encompassing a date of said visit; and
 - an output processor for initiating communication of data, representing said visit record and said second diagnostic code compatible with said second assignment system, to a destination system in response to a command.
12. A system according to claim 11, wherein an individual set of rules has a time period of validity determined by a start date and an end date.
13. A system according to claim 11, wherein said sets of rules associated with particular time periods of validity comprise a plurality of sets of rules for

processing said visit record and said first diagnostic code, for processing said visit record to determine said second diagnostic code compatible with said second assignment system valid during the particular time period; and the data processor for processing said received record and said first diagnostic code using said sets of rules to provide said visit record including said second diagnostic code, said second diagnostic code being valid for a particular time period encompassing a date of said visit.

14. A system for associating a diagnostic code to a record of a patient visit, comprising:
 - an interface processor for receiving a visit record;
 - a source of sets of rules associated with particular time periods of validity, for processing said visit record to determine said diagnostic code compatible with an assignment system valid during a particular time period;
 - a data processor for processing said visit record using said sets of rules to provide said visit record including said diagnostic code, said diagnostic code being valid for a particular time period encompassing a date of said visit; and
 - an output processor for initiating communication of data, representing said visit record and said diagnostic code compatible with said assignment system, to a destination system in response to a command.
15. A system for associating a diagnostic code to a record of a patient visit, comprising:
 - an interface processor for receiving visit records individually including a first diagnostic code derived by using a first assignment system;
 - a source of rules for processing individual visit records to determine a second diagnostic code, for individual visit records, compatible with a second assignment system; and
 - a data processor for using said rules for processing said visit records and first diagnostic codes to provide visit records including second diagnostic codes compatible with said second assignment system by, grouping visit records into

clusters comprising common characteristics using characteristic information in said visit records and assigning second diagnostic codes compatible with said second assignment system, to visit records in said visit record clusters.

16. A system according to claim 15, wherein characteristics in visit records include at least one of, (a) a primary diagnosis identifier, (b) a medical procedure identifier, (c) a patient age, (d) a patient gender, (e) a secondary diagnosis identifier, (f) a service identifier identifying a service performed for a patient, (g) a length of patient stay in a medical facility, (h) an admission date, (i) a visit end date, (j) a diagnosis date and (k) a procedure date.
17. A method for associating a diagnostic code to a record of a patient visit, comprising the activities of:
 - receiving a visit record comprising a first diagnostic code derived by using a first assignment system;
 - retrieving rules for processing said visit record to determine a second diagnostic code compatible with a second assignment system;
 - processing said visit record and said first diagnostic code using rules to provide said visit record including said second diagnostic code; and
 - initiating communication of said visit record including said second diagnostic code compatible with said second assignment system to a destination system.
18. A storage medium according to claim 17 containing computer readable instructions for performing said activities of the method of claim 17.
19. A method for associating a diagnostic code to a record of a patient visit, comprising the activities of:
 - receiving a visit record comprising a first diagnostic code derived by using a first assignment system;

retrieving sets of rules associated with particular time periods of validity, for processing said visit record to determine a second diagnostic code compatible with a second assignment system valid during a particular time period;

processing said visit record and said first diagnostic code using said sets of rules to provide said visit record including said second diagnostic code, said second diagnostic code being valid for a particular time period encompassing a date of said visit; and

initiating communication of data, representing said visit record and said second diagnostic code compatible with said second assignment system, to a destination system in response to a command.

20. A storage medium according to claim 19 containing computer readable instructions for performing said activities of the method of claim 19.

21. A method for associating a diagnostic code to a record of a patient visit, comprising the activities of:

receiving a visit record comprising a first diagnostic code, said first diagnostic code derivable from a first assignment system;

retrieving sets of rules associated with particular time periods of validity, for processing said visit record to determine a second diagnostic code, said second diagnostic code compatible with a second assignment system valid during a particular time period;

processing said visit record using said sets of rules to provide said visit record including said second diagnostic code, said second diagnostic code being valid for a particular time period encompassing a date of said visit; and

initiating communication of data, representing said visit record and said second diagnostic code compatible with said assignment system, to a destination system in response to a command.

22. The method of claim 21, further comprising:

obtaining a time dependent validity indicator relatable to the sets of rules, the time dependent validity indicator having a start date and an end date; and

testing said visit record comprising a first diagnostic code assignment date to verify that the first diagnostic code assignment date falls between the time dependent validity indicator start date and the time dependent validity indicator end date.

23. The method of claim 21, further comprising:

grouping said visit record into a cluster having common characteristics using characteristic information in said visit record; and

providing said second diagnostic code compatible with the second assignment system, corresponding to the visit record in the visit record cluster.

24. A machine-readable medium having stored thereon:

instructions adapted to process a visit record, the visit record comprising a first diagnostic code created by a first assignment system, using at least one of a set of rules to provide the visit record comprising a second diagnostic code; and

the set of rules adapted to process the visit record to determine the second diagnostic code compatible with a second assignment system comprising information adapted to derive a diagnostic code set.